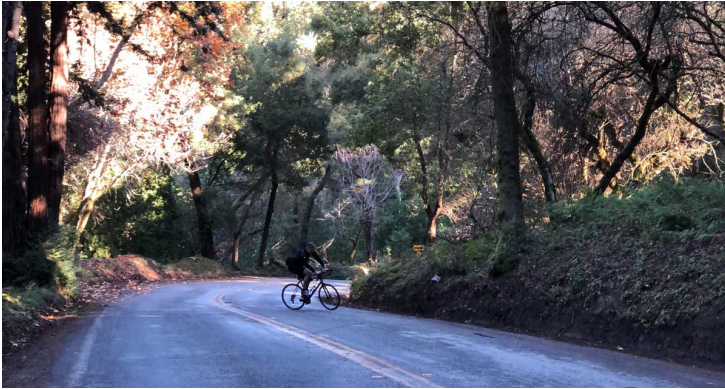


## An interestingly-different ride



Walt heading up, with a bit of a sideways component, Redwood Gulch. I was on my own today, which usually means doing the usual (Old LaHonda/Pescadero/Tunitas) but I really didn't feel like doing the usual. Maybe it was time to do something a bit more challenging. Like Redwood Gulch! What I didn't know was that Redwood Gulch would be the least-challenging part of the ride.

Heading south I picked up Jeff Z. Or rather, Jeff Z picked up me. He was on the final leg of his early 75 mile ride, heading in the same direction, just a whole lot faster. I did what I could to stay on his wheel, and through Portola Valley, where there's that long uphill grind to the "guardrail" at the top, let's just say I stayed focused on that guardrail, trying to figure out if I could stay on his wheel for that long. I did, but he wasn't going full gas. Looking at Strava times for that segment, it looks like he could have done another 50 watts, and me, I probably didn't have even 5 watts to spare.

So guess you could say the train left the station in a hurry! It normally takes me a good hour to really get warmed up on a ride, so this was a rude way to start, but I felt OK after Jeff headed home while I continued south. On the way I dropped by the location of our recently-closed Los Altos store; it seemed appropriate that leaves were blowing around in circles in front, kind of that dust in the wind feeling.

I was going to hit Redwood Gulch pretty hard, kind of a celebration of the really good numbers on Friday's blood tests, but picked up my own passenger along the way, Walt, a recent transplant to the area who didn't know his way around other than to head west to get to Skyline. Probably not a bad thing I wasn't going for time on Redwood Gulch anyway, as it was really slippery. I was telling him about Mr. Mustard but alas, no sign of Mr. Mustard's hot dog & coke cart at Saratoga Gap!

Walt headed back down 9 while I took off north on Skyline, feeling pretty strong, surprisingly strong actually. I stopped briefly to take a picture of my favorite oak tree before continuing to West Old LaHonda, riding the now-finished-and-legal-to-ride section that's been out of commission for what, 7 or 8 months?

Just over 60 miles, a bit low on average watts due to taking it easy heading up Redwood Gulch and Highway 9. That's OK. I feel good!